

## 家庭議會

### 防止學生自殺委員會的最終報告

#### 引言

防止學生自殺委員會（該委員會）主席葉兆輝教授會就該委員會的最終報告，講解主要的調查結果和建議。本文件旨在提供背景資料，以便委員討論葉教授講解的內容。有關的投影片簡報副本載於附件 A。

#### 背景

2. 在二零一五／一六學年，學生自殺事件頻生。教育局因應這個情況，在二零一六年三月三十日成立該委員會，目的是(a)分析導致近期香港學生自殺的可能成因；(b)就如何可加強現有的服務以防止學生自殺提出建議；以及(c)建議防止學生自殺的措施。

3. 該委員會由 21 名委員組成，他們分別來自不同的社會界別，包括公共醫療專家、精神科醫生、心理學家、社會工作者、教師、校長、家長、青年和政府官員。此外，該委員會分別就精神健康、學校、家庭、媒體和青年／大專院校等方面成立了五個工作小組，以便就各個範疇進行更深入的討論。

4. 二零一六年八月二十三日，家庭工作小組參與家庭核心價值及家庭教育推廣小組委員會會議，並講解初步調查結果。有關的會議記錄摘錄於附件 B。

#### 最終報告

5. 該委員會綜觀過去三個學年所發生的 71 宗本地中小學和大專院校學生自殺個案後，在最終報告內推斷學生的自殺行為實由多個因素交互影響而成，包括精神健康問題、心理因素、家庭關係與適應問

題、朋輩關係問題、學校適應問題和學業壓力。有關的調查結果與國際研究的結果相若。

6. 為防止學生自殺，該委員會在最終報告內提出多項以學生為本位的建議，內容涵蓋三個不同層面的服務：(a)以全港學生為對象的普及性預防策略；(b)以有較高風險的學生為對象的選擇性預防策略；以及(c)以有自殺風險的學生為對象的針對性預防策略。上述建議可歸類為以下四大策略：

- (a) 加強及早識別工作、提升精神健康和鼓勵求助行為；
- (b) 加強家長教育及家庭支援、促進親子關係和提升家庭功能；
- (c) 推動傳媒發揮專業功能和善用社交媒體支援學生；以及
- (d) 加強生涯規劃教育和提供多個升學就業途徑。

最終報告摘要的副本載於附件 C。

## 徵詢意見

7. 請委員備悉該委員會的調查結果和建議，並提出意見。

家庭議會秘書處  
二零一六年十二月

# 防止學生自殺委員會 最終報告



Meeting with Family Council  
2016年12月 8 日

## 背景

- 防止學生自殺委員會於2016年3月30日成立
- 成員來自社會各界(包括精神科、心理學、教育和社會服務，政府決策局及部門、家長及學生代表)

## 背景 - 職權範圍

- 根據最新所得的資料，並參考全球研究結果，分析香港過去三個學年學生自殺的個案，嘗試了解可能成因
- 就現時與防止學生自殺有關的服務提出改善建議
- 建議預防學生自殺的措施

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## 背景

- 五個工作小組：  
精神健康、學校、家庭、媒體、青年 / 大專院校
- 每個工作小組召集人會按需要邀請有關界別的專家及持份者加入



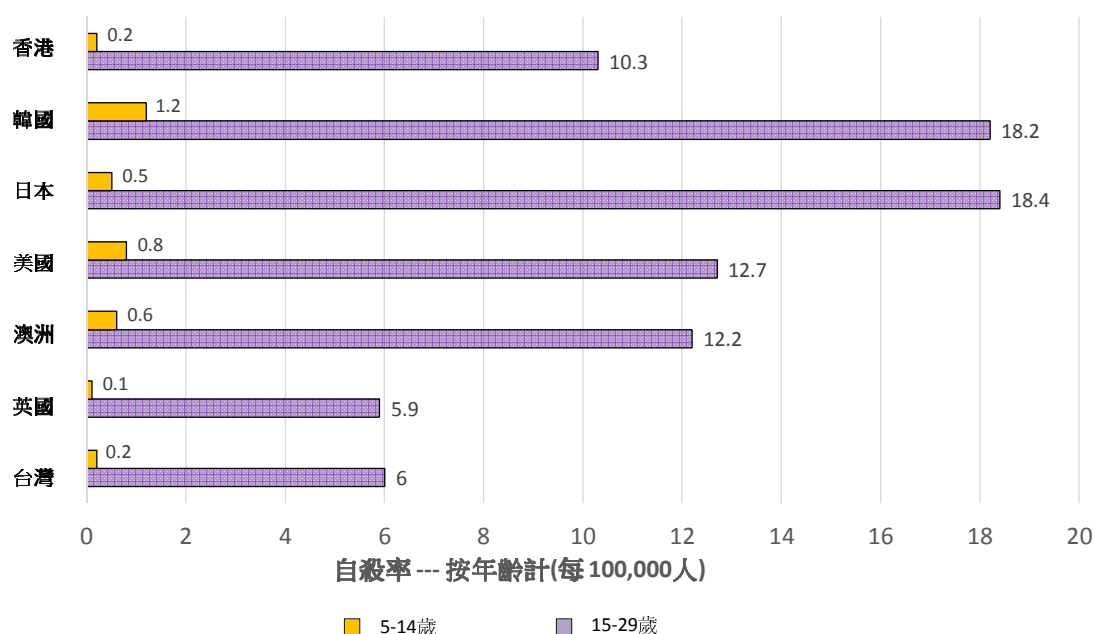
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# 背景

- 向不同持分者搜集意見，包括立法局議員及關注學生自殺的團體，例如：
  - 青年事務委員會
  - 香港社會服務聯會的家庭及社區服務組
  - 家庭議會轄下的家庭核心價值及家庭教育推廣小組委員會
  - 兒童權利論壇
  - 教育統籌委員會

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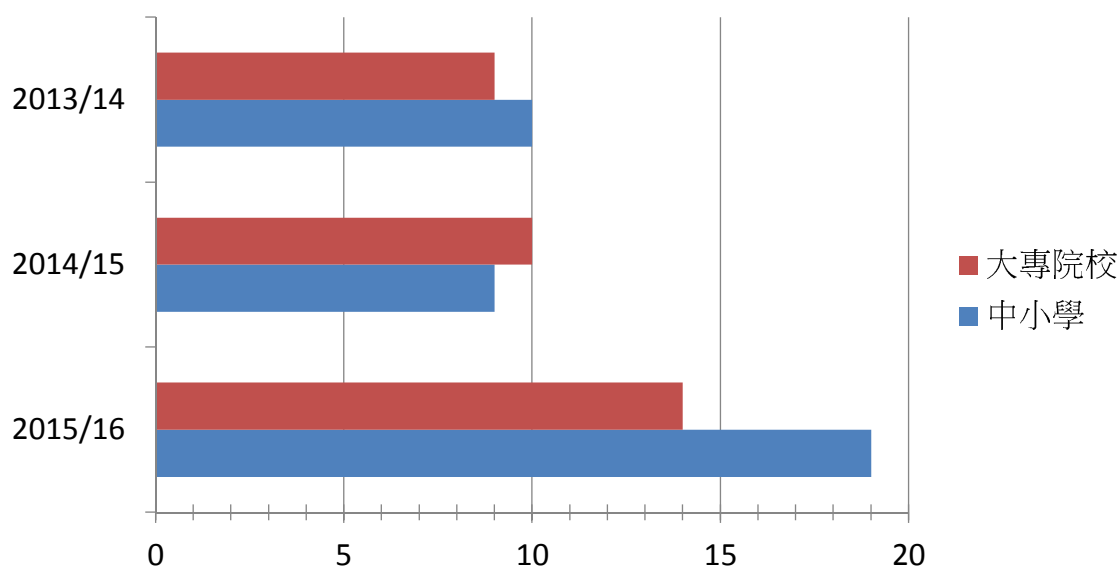
## 香港與其他發展國家及鄰近地區的比較



資料來源：香港大學香港賽馬會防止自殺研究中心

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## 過去三學年學生自殺個案的數目



三年總數共71人

## 2013-2016 primary and secondary student suicide cases - Areas of concern (as at 27.5.2016, by EDB)



	Mental Illness <sup>1</sup>	Adjustment		Relationship		Emotion problems <sup>6</sup>	1 area of concern	2 areas of concern	3 areas of concern	4 areas of concern
		Study-related <sup>2</sup>	Family-related <sup>3</sup>	Peers <sup>4</sup>	Family <sup>5</sup>					
	7 (21%)	27 (79%)		29 (85%)		20 (59%)				
1	x		x		x			✓		
2			x		x			✓		
3					x	x		✓		
4			x	x	x	x			✓	
5				x		x		✓		
6	x				x	x			✓	
7					x		✓			
8	x	x						✓		
9	x	x	x					✓		
10				x		x		✓		
11		x		x				✓		
12	x			x				✓		
13		x	x	x	x			✓		
14			x		x	x			✓	
15	x			x	x	x		✓		
16				x	x	x		✓		
17		x	x				✓			
18		x	x	x		x			✓	
19		x			x			✓		
20		x				x		✓		
21	x	x		x		x				✓
22		x	x		x	x			✓	
23			x		x	x			✓	
24			x		x	x			✓	
25	x	x			x	x				✓
26		x	x		x	x			✓	
27		x	x	x	x			✓		
28			x		x			✓		
29			x	x	x	x			✓	
30		x	x			x			✓	
31			x		x	x			✓	
32	x	x				x			✓	
33		x	x	x	x			✓		
34		x			x				✓	
	7 (21%)	19 (56%)	18 (53%)	14 (41%)	24 (71%)	20 (59%)	2 (6%)	17 (50%)	13 (38%)	2 (6%)

Note1: Cases with psychiatric diagnosis

Note2: Non-attending cases, repeaters or cases transferring to a new school

Note3: Cases with family debt, low income or parents working in Mainland

Note4: Cases with boy/girl relationship problems, isolation issues or poor peer relationship

Note5: Cases with family discord, conflict with parents, lack of family support or divorced/ single parents

Note6: Cases expressing negative thoughts/academic-related stress/ suicidal ideation

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# Areas of concern in student suicide for post-secondary institutions



1. Psychological issues – e.g. worries about health, financial problems, study-related stress, work-related stress, stress about life.
2. School adjustment – e.g. adjusting to the university life
3. Family adjustment – e.g. from single-parent families and insufficient family support



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# Messages from suicide students



- Size of word is proportional to the average rate of each word's appearance in each suicide note.
- Words with average rate lower than 1/1000 were removed.



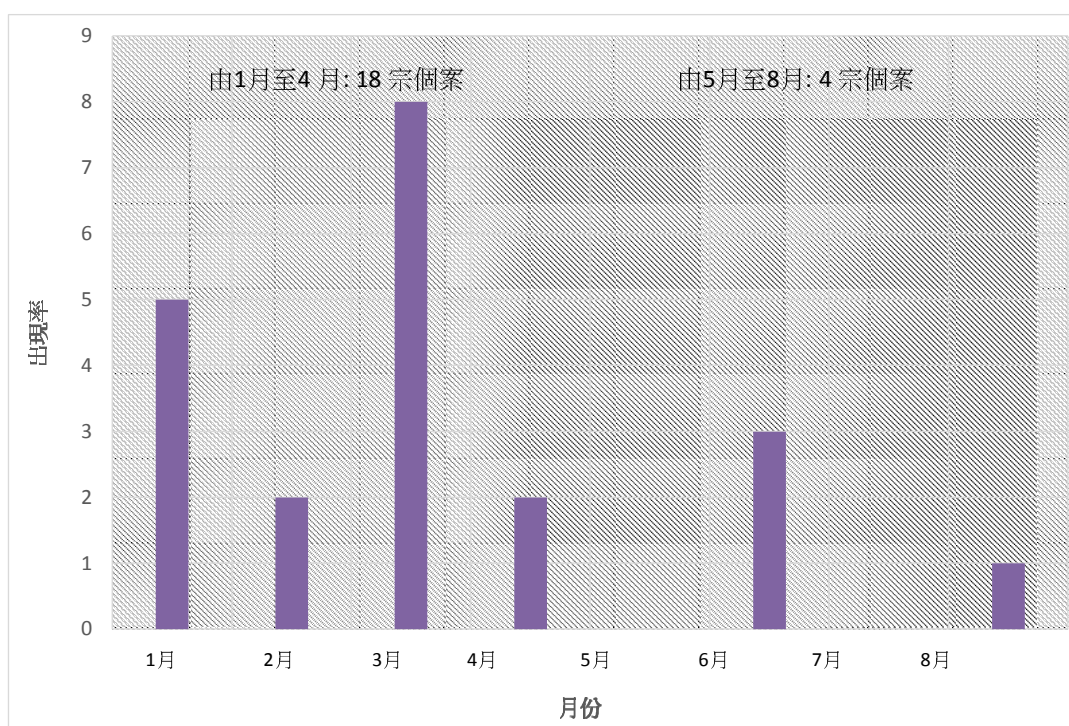
by primary and secondary school students



by post-secondary school students

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# 2016 年1月至8月發生的學生自殺個案



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## 傳媒報道

- 傳媒報道的篇幅與學生自殺身亡的數字存在一定關係:

在2016年3月，傳媒報道最為廣泛及顯著，而當時就出現了學生接連自殺的事件

當傳媒明顯減少大篇幅或煽情報道，學生自殺身亡個案亦驟減:

由2016年1月至4月的18宗減至2016年5月至8月的4宗





# 危險因素



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## 觀察

- 自殺非由單一原因引起
- 自殺行為前多有徵兆
- 大部分有精神健康問題的學生未被識別
- 自殺行為以男性較多
- 涉及中一及中四的個案有所增加
- 傳媒廣泛報道可觸發仿效自殺行為

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# 傳媒報道

- 傳媒報道與學生自殺身亡關係:

數據顯示，2016年1月至4月的18宗減至2016年5月至8月的4宗

當傳媒明顯減少大篇幅或煽情報道，學生自殺身亡個案亦驟減，情況明顯改善



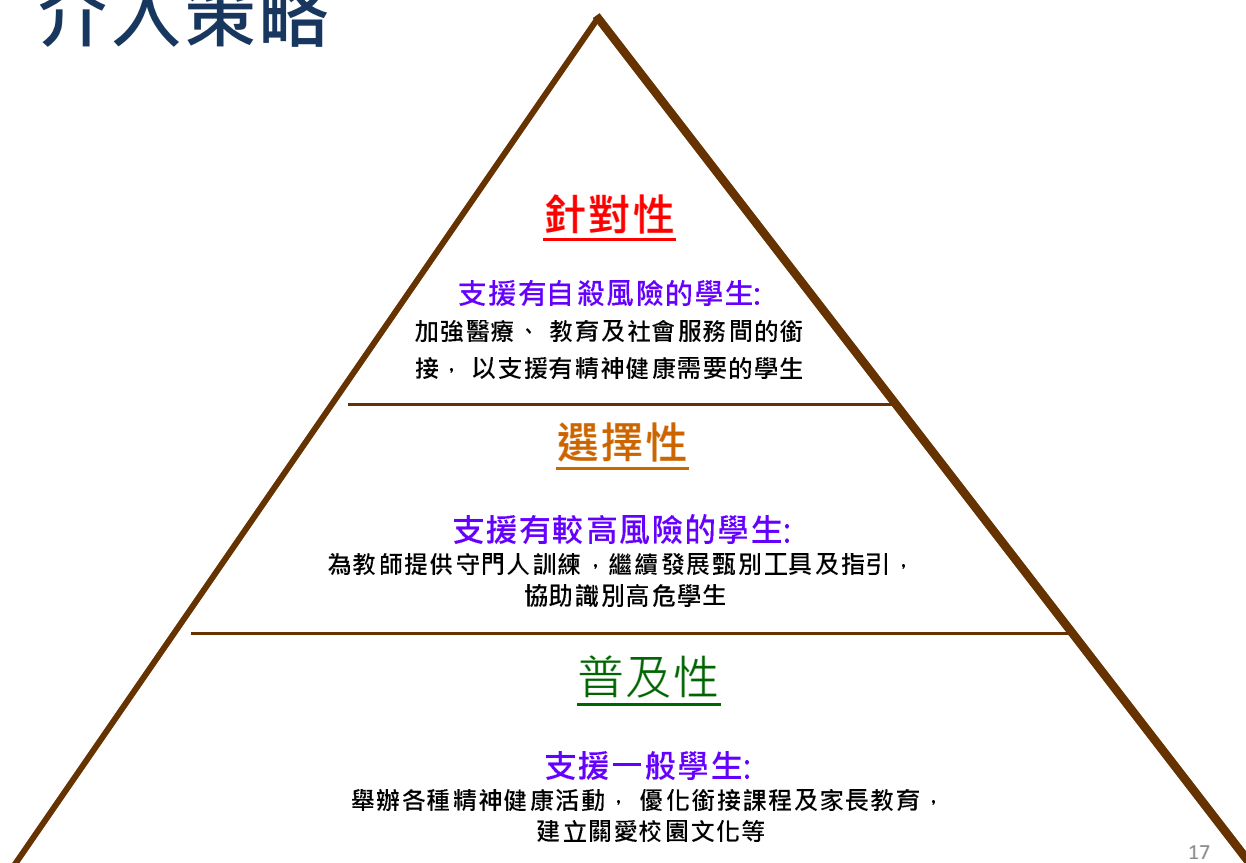
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## 方向

- 為確保制訂的建議以實證及實用為本，我們
  - 深入分析香港過去三個學年發生的學生自殺個案
  - 研究流行病學概況
  - 收集工作小組及不同持分者的意見
  - 了解現時香港預防自殺的工作，填補服務空隙

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# 介入策略



## 建議

### 加強對家庭的支援



# 建議(一)

## 加強對學校及大專院校學生的支援



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## 普及性層面

1. 加強對精神健康問題的意識，減低導致抗拒求助的負面標籤，締造一個能支援學生發展適應能力的環境

### *施行策略*

- 加強跨界別協作
- 繼續加強校本「健康校園政策」
- 學校的價值教育加強精神健康、心理健康和生死教育的元素
- 營造正向、關愛與支持的校園以配合學生的全人發展
- **家校建立緊密溝通，加強現行的溝通渠道**

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# 普及性層面

## 2. 加強支援學生面對學習環境及學習階段的轉變

### 施行策略

- 加強現時學校轉交學生相關資料予新學校的機制(學校應繼續加強家長教育，讓家長明白持續介入的重要性，從而同意轉交資料的安排)。
- 鼓勵學校在中一及中四的銜接課程中，加強關注學生的心理社交適應和調適能力
- 大專院校可考慮於學期內安排一段休息和放鬆的時間，學系人員及舍監亦應主動協助新生適應新環境

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# 選擇性層面

3. 為教師、朋輩、大學人員及家長等提供「守門人」培訓
4. 進一步優化有助識別高危學生的甄別工具、指引及資料
5. 政府須加強轉介學生接受醫管局評估服務的安排，把徵求家長同意的做法常規化

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## 針對性層面

### 6. 加強醫療、教育和社會服務之間的協調

- 食物及衛生局由2016/17學年起與教育局、醫管局及社署合作，開展一項為期兩年的先導計劃，設立一個包括醫護、教育及社會福利界別專業人士的校本跨專業平台 (委員會認為有自殺風險或精神健康問題的學生，需要學校、家庭和精神健康專業人員合力提供協助)。

### 7. 大專院校宜確保被識別為有精神健康問題的學生可容易地在校園或鄰近醫療機構 / 醫院獲得精神科及心理輔導服務

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## 資源支援

### 8. 提供額外資源讓學校推廣精神及心理健康

### 9. 大專院校調配更多來自大學教育資助委員會及其他方面的資源，以加強推廣精神及心理健康、甄別服務及「守門人」訓練

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# 建議(二)

## 加強對家庭的支援



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## 普及性層面

10. 社署有系統地統籌、計劃和提供家庭生活及家長教育
11. 綜合家庭服務中心考慮安排外展教育計劃
12. 家長教育內容應包括有效及實際可行的管教技巧，提醒家長對子女應有合理期望，家庭與學校合作事宜委員會應積極推廣《快樂孩子約章》

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## 普及性層面

13. 政府考慮推廣某月為家庭月，集政府與非政府機構之力，每年宣揚有意義的主題
14. 教育局應為學校就如何加強中學生與家長的正面溝通安排更多分享機會，亦可考慮進行相關研究

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## 選擇性層面

15. 教育局應為家長提供「守門人」訓練，提高他們對學生精神健康問題及網絡欺凌徵兆的敏感度
16. 衛生署轄下母嬰健康院進一步向家長推廣和擴展其現有服務，並推廣至準父母及特別關顧單親、離婚 / 喪偶及再婚的家庭
17. 社署多推廣為處於危機的個人和家庭所提供的深入支援及輔導服務，並考慮簡化轉介程序

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## 針對性層面

18. 社署應廣泛宣傳家庭支援計劃所提供的跟進和社區支援服務，支援有可能受到暴力對待或患有精神病的家庭成員，以及與社會關係疏離的家庭



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## 建議(三)

加強傳統及社交媒體的角色



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## 普及性層面

19. 政府應善用社交媒體舉辦和宣傳推廣心理及精神健康的活動
20. 借助致力防止自殺工作的組織的力量及相關研究，繼續推動媒體從業員以恰當及符合專業操守的方式報道自殺新聞



## 選擇性層面

21. 教導青少年社交媒體禮儀及如何面對社交媒體上的自殺報道
22. 持續推行網上外展輔導服務
23. 繼續進行和支持跨界別合作: 研究中心可聯同專業人士與社交媒體，繼續開發網上預防自殺工具、分享相關知識及進行研究等

# 建議(四)

## 推廣多元升學及就業途徑



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## 推廣多元升學及就業途徑

24. 加強宣傳多元出路及資歷架構，及推廣多元智能和不同職業的認受性，幫助家長及學生認識生涯規劃的最新情況
25. 學校應繼續在課程規劃和學習活動中融入職業探索的元素，教育局亦應聯同學校及持份者繼續加強生涯規劃教育

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# 建議(五)

## 其他與教育制度相關的意見



## 其他與教育制度相關的意見

26. 教育局考慮檢視教育制度的有關部分，適當地支援和處理學生及年輕人的發展及不同需要

- 提升學生處理壓力的能力
- 協助學生認識自己、接納自己的限制，發展個人潛能
- 認同、讚許及發展學生不同的天賦和能力



## 其他與教育制度相關的意見

- 委員認為長遠而言，教育制度應促進學生的全人發展，並協助中學生自我裝備，順利過渡至專上教育及之後的階段。
- 委員認為須透過制訂推廣精神健康的預防措施和檢視現行教育系統的某些相關部分，扭轉社會所崇尚的價值觀，以減輕學生所面對的壓力。

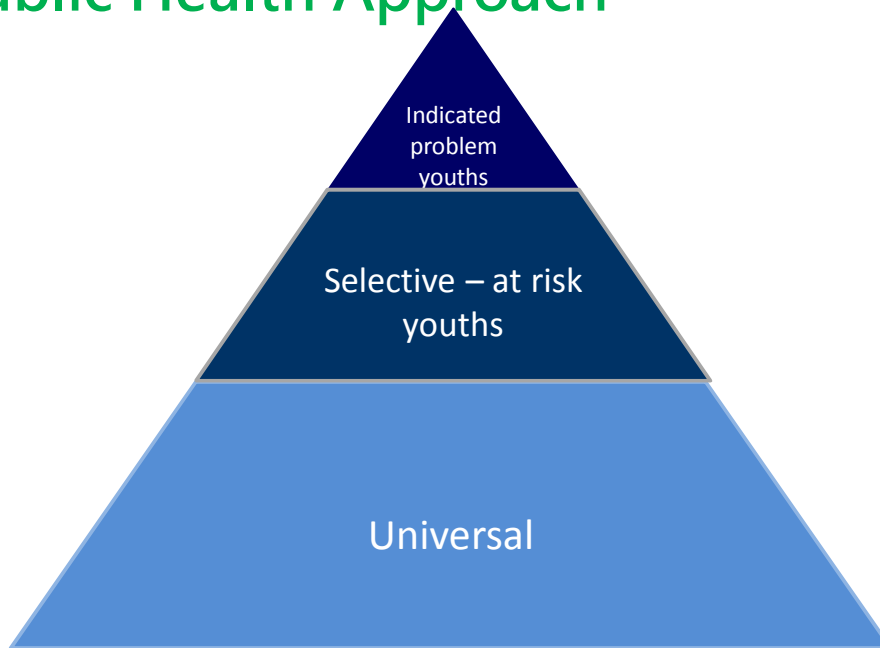
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## 其他與教育制度相關的意見

- 委員亦鼓勵學校繼續定期檢視學與教範疇例如家課及評估政策，確保做法能切合不同學生的能力及需要。
- 在香港中學文憑考試（文憑試）成績之外，大專院校應同時承認學生在社會服務、體藝發展等範疇的其他學習經驗，務求收生制度更具彈性。委員認為大學應採納及廣泛宣傳各種升讀大專院校的途徑，收生結果亦應公佈讓學校、家長及學生知曉。

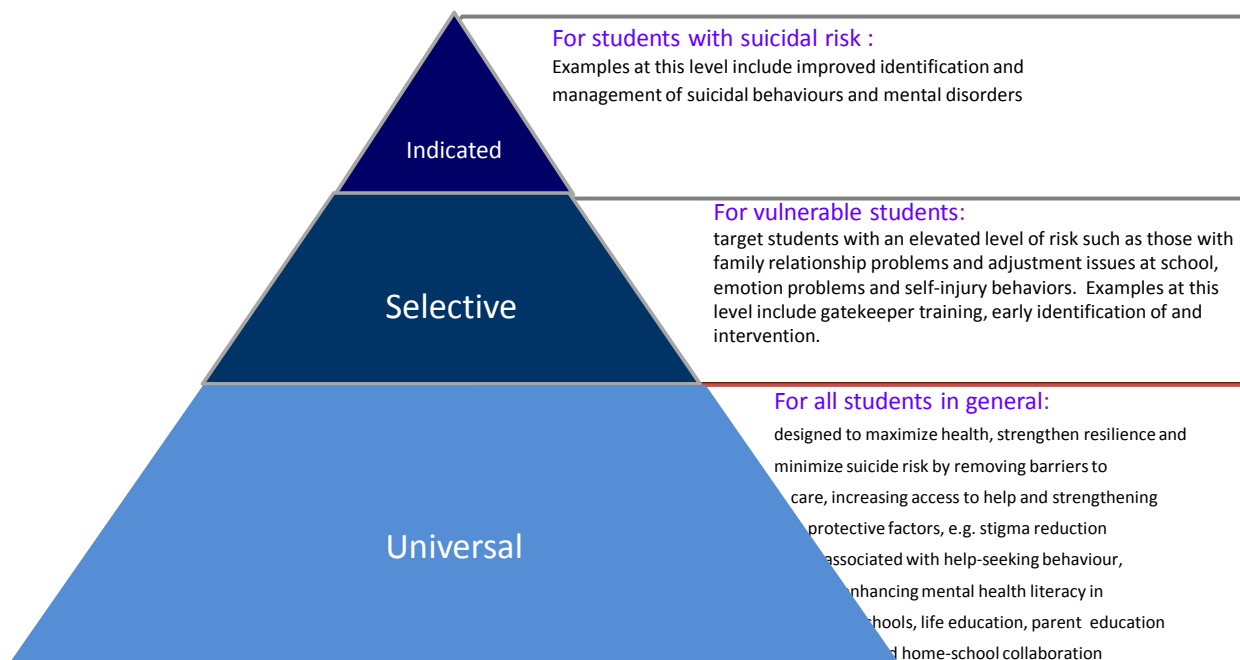
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# A Public Health Approach



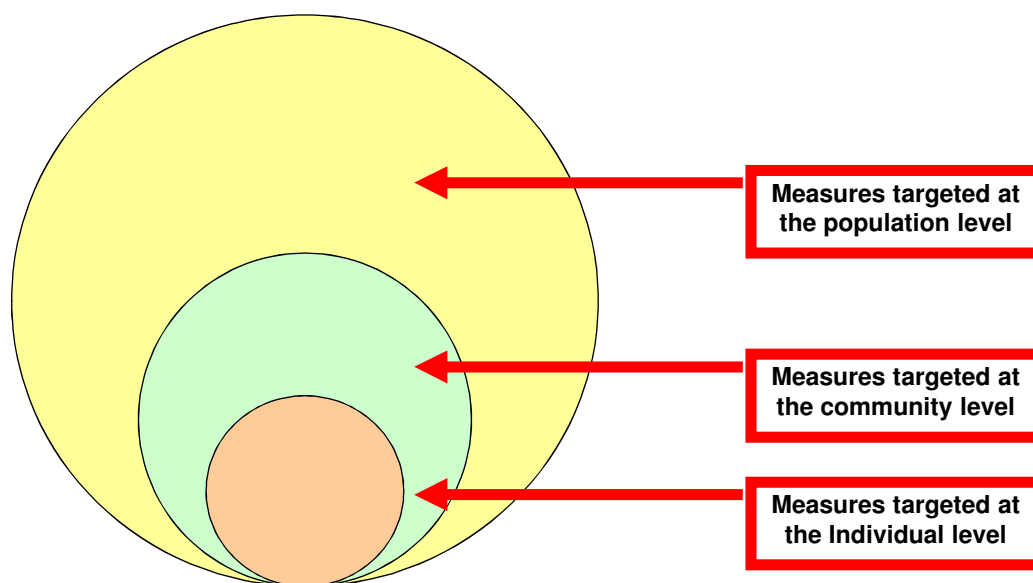
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# Recommendations



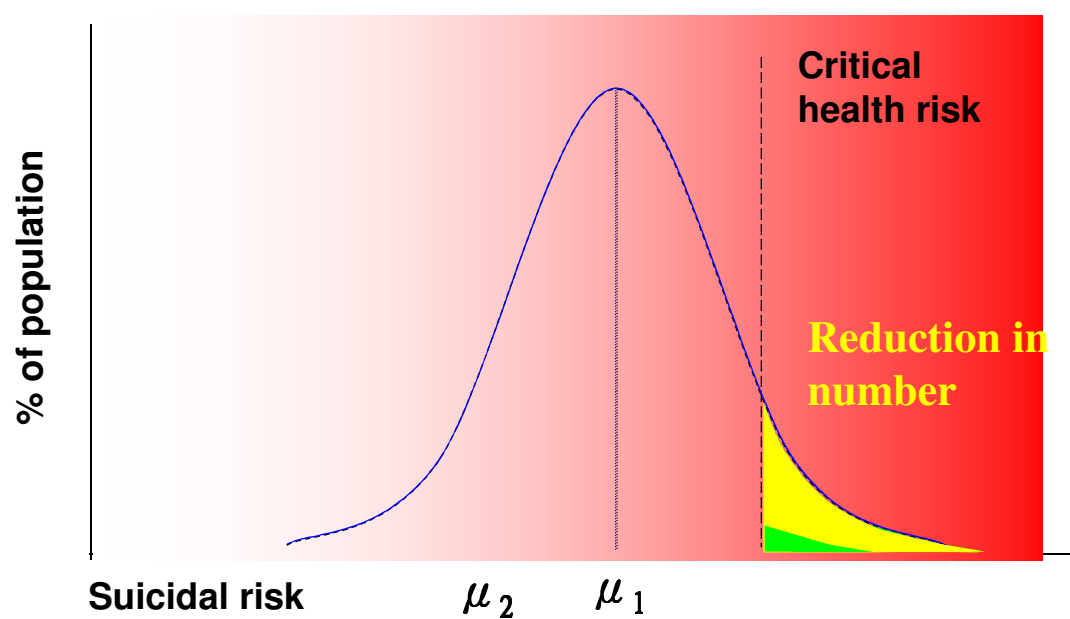
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# Framework of mental health enhancement



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# A Public Health Approach



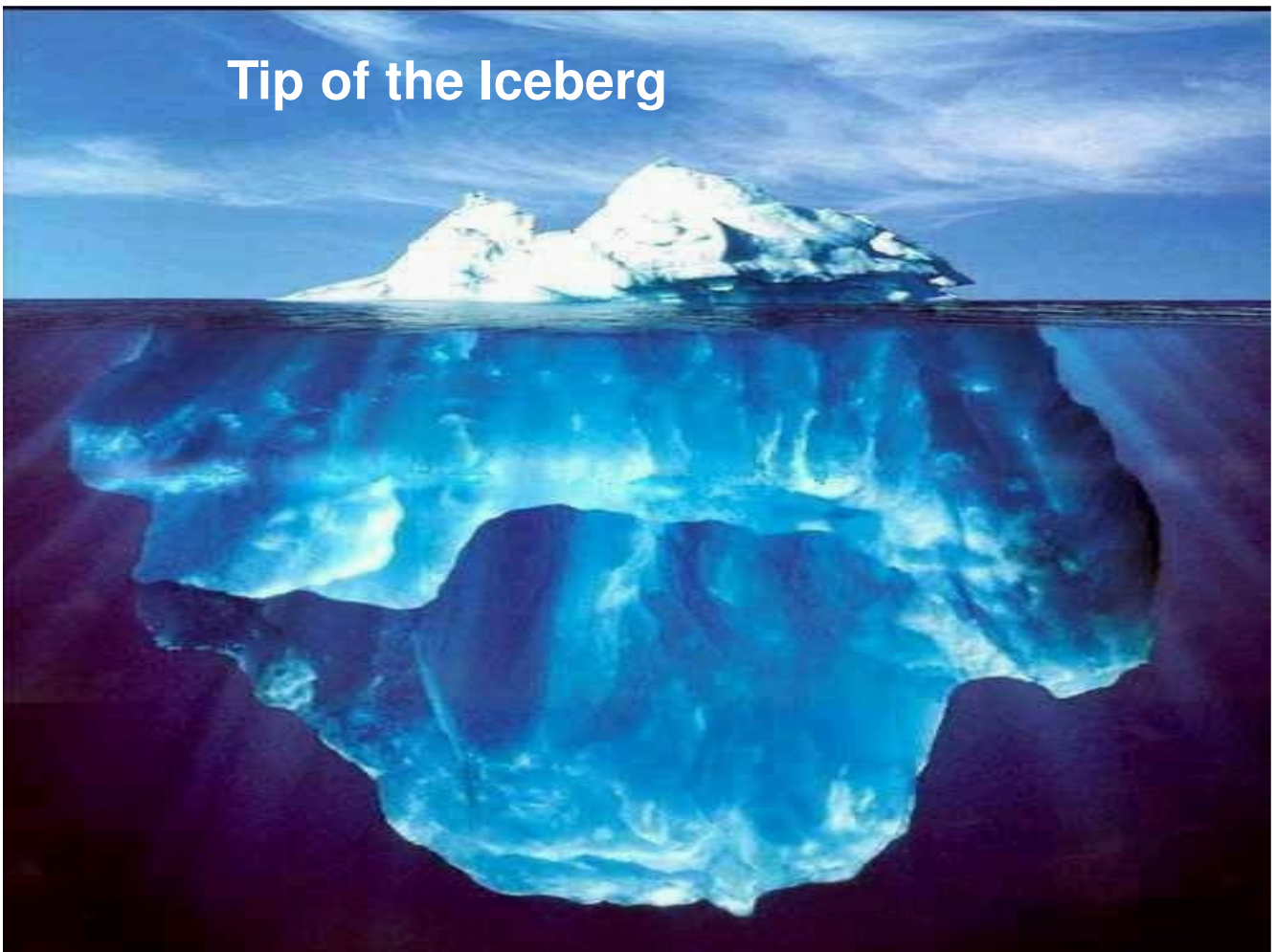
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# FLOODING METAPHOR 洪水隱喻



Tip of the Iceberg





## Analogy of a clock:

- second arm:  
(political activities)
- Minute arm  
(economic policy )
- Hour arm  
(family policy )



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## 總結

通過政府、各持份者及所有社會人士的協作，定能為預防學生自殺找到更全面的對策，並締造互相關愛的环境支援學生的心理健康





**多謝!**

節錄自二零一六年八月二十三日  
家庭核心價值及家庭教育推廣小組委員會會議記錄

**議程項目 3 — 簡介防止學生自殺委員會轄下家庭工作小組的調查結果和建議（第 SC PR 5/2016 號文件）**

6. 召集人扼要地告知與會者，二零一五至一六學年學生自殺事件頻生，教育局已因應有關情況，於二零一六年三月三十日成立防止學生自殺委員會(委員會)<sup>1</sup>，負責調查學生自殺的可能成因，並就如何預防中小學及專上學生自殺建議短、中、長期措施。委員會亦就精神健康、學校、家庭、媒體和青年／大專院校等方面成立了五個工作小組，以便從不同層面研究預防的措施。

7. 家庭工作小組召集人湯修齊先生、社會福利署助理署長(青年及感化服務)兼家庭工作小組成員吳家謙先生、高級專責教育主任(教育心理服務)兼家庭工作小組秘書李瑞霞女士應邀以投影片簡報的方式，講解調查結果和該工作小組的建議(第 SC\_PR\_5/2016 號文件的附件 C)。

8. 家庭工作小組明白每宗學生自殺個案背後的原因複雜，而學生自殺亦由不同因素所引發，例如精神健康、情緒、適應能力和人際關係等問題。家庭工作小組在商議建議措施時，提議可考慮採用世界衛生組織的三層介入模式。委員會特別從「普及性」、「選擇性」和「針對性」三方面提出了多項建議，以照顧不同人口組別和風險群組的需要。當中的主要建議如下：

- (a) 改善家庭生活和家長教育；
- (b) 提升「守門人」訓練；
- (c) 加強對特定高危家庭提供援助；以及
- (d) 擴闊大專院校的甄選準則。

9. 關於家長教育方面，家庭工作小組認為有必要推廣「正面親職」，重點應放在改變態度和加強有關發展、預防和補救三個層面

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<sup>1</sup> 該委員會由香港大學香港賽馬會防止自殺研究中心總監葉兆輝教授擔任主席，成員包括學校／家長／青年／學生的代表、醫護界與社會福利界的專業人士和政府各政策局及部門的代表。

的知識與技巧。父母應學習尊重子女的獨特之處和重視他們的多元發展、發掘和培養子女多方面的才能、在子女處於人生逆境時協助他們發展情緒智商和提升逆境商數、培養子女的品德，並教導青年人凡事抱有希望和懷有感激之心。家長亦應因應子女的資質和興趣，調整自己對子女的期望和作出合理要求；了解子女或會遇上網絡欺凌而感到困擾時，找出共同應對之策；倘子女出現適應或情緒問題，及早與校方溝通；協助子女增強抗逆力；以及在有需要時尋求專業支援。此外，家庭工作小組亦作出多項建議，當中包括推出《快樂孩子約章》以推廣健康家庭生活和提示如何養兒育女，並推廣每年五月為家庭月以加強社會對家庭問題的認識。

10. 成員同意應進一步推廣家長教育。他們提出的意見概述如下：

- (a) 贊成及早在幼稚園階段提供介入服務，並應加強家長教育和對弱勢家庭(包括少數族羣、新來港家庭、父母有虐兒傾向的家庭、成員有精神健康問題的家庭等)提供支援；
- (b) 為加強對學生提供支援，應建立師(關懷學生的成年人)生之間的聯繫作為第二層支援，從而協助父母與子女進行溝通和作為他們的溝通後盾；
- (c) 為避免朋輩之間出現不必要的比較，父母應肯定子女具有獨特之處和多方面的才能，而這種觀念亦應在社會上廣為宣傳；
- (d) 除了加強為家長和教師提供「守門人」培訓外，也應為有需要的青年人開辦師友課程；
- (e) 在中學和大專院校進一步灌輸生死教育觀念，鼓勵學生以積極態度看待生死問題和在解難方面發揮創意；
- (f) 應加強有關精神病的教育(例如製作宣傳短片以進行教育)，增加市民對精神病的認識，以及避免公眾把精神病與情緒問題混為一談。由於家長的精神健康問題可能是導致學生自殺的成因之一，因此應調撥更多資源以紓緩因輪候服務期太長和醫療費用高昂而出現的問題；
- (g) 除社工外，可考慮調撥額外資源增聘醫療人員和中學教師；

- (h) 家長工時過長和工作量大，可能是導致產生種種家庭問題的背後原因。為方便接觸忙碌的家長，可安排在午飯時間於商業區舉辦親子研討會和工作坊；
- (i) 在進行事業規劃時，應推廣多元出路的概念，以否定學業成績是決定未來能否取得成就的最重要因素的說法；
- (j) 相關各方和政府政策局／部門如能加強協作，可有助發揮更大的協同效應，並可避免資源重疊；以及
- (k) 自殺是風氣問題，而社交媒體對公眾(尤其是青年人)產生很大影響，因此可考慮如何把社會的着眼點，從學生之間的競爭轉移至鼓勵他們培養積極正面的思想，以及加強他們使用社交媒體以履行社會責任，從而改變這種風氣。

11. 湯先生回應說，各個界別應攜手合作，共同努力提供更多支援和資源，透過推廣家庭生活教育和親子教育防止學生自殺。李女士補充說，五個工作小組全皆會按防止學生自殺措施所帶來的影響程度、迫切程度、是否可行和資源承擔，去為所提建議排列推行的優先次序。預期委員會會於二零一六年十月底或之前向教育局提交一份完整的報告。召集人感謝家庭工作小組代表的分享，並表示家庭議會及／或小組委員會日後制訂推廣和宣傳活動的主題時，或會考慮參考委員會的報告。

## **Executive Summary**

To address the spate of student suicides in the 2015/16 school year, the Education Bureau (EDB), among others, set up the Committee on Prevention of Student Suicides (the Committee) on 30 March 2016, which was tasked to (1) examine the possible causes of recent student suicides in Hong Kong based on the analysis of the latest available data as well as reference drawing from global research; (2) advise on the areas of existing services related to suicide prevention that could be strengthened; and (3) propose measures to prevent student suicides.

2. The Committee comprises 21 members from different sectors of the community including public health experts, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, teachers, principals, parents, youth and government officials. It is chaired by Professor Paul Yip, the Director of the Centre for Suicide Research and Prevention (CSRP) at the University of Hong Kong. Five Working Groups on Mental Health, Schools, Families, Media and Youth/Post-secondary Institutions have been set up, with the aim to providing more in-depth discussion in each of the areas. The Committee has examined the 71 suicide cases in primary schools, secondary schools and post-secondary institutions in the last three school/academic years, as well as other related information (including reports from the Coroner's Court, the Police, the Department of Health (DH), the Social Welfare Department (SWD), the EDB, schools and other related reports).

3. Suicide is a complicated social problem with multifactorial causes. The present investigation reveals that multiple factors have interacted and contributed to students' suicidal behaviours, including mental health issues, psychological concerns, family relationship and adjustment problems, peer relationship problems, school adjustment and academic stress. The findings are comparable to results of international studies (World Health Organisation, 2014).

4. In addition, local studies from the CSRP revealed that media reporting of student suicides might have a role in triggering copycat suicidal behaviours among youth. The Committee appreciates the media's apposite responses to its appeal in news reporting, and with the significant improvement in media reporting there was a rapid decline of suicide number in the past four months. Data indicated that there were 18 cases in the four-month period from January to April 2016 and 4 cases in the next four months from May to August 2016 with the decline in magnitude of media reporting regarding student suicides.

5. The recommendations proposed by the Committee strive to address the existing service gaps and the needs of children and young people. In line with the World Health Organisation (WHO) guiding principles, these recommendations are directed towards three levels, namely, "Universal", "Selective" and "Indicated", to cater for the needs of different population and risk groups. Specifically, the following areas of services at different levels should be covered: (i)

Universal prevention strategies targeting all students; (ii) Selective prevention strategies targeting vulnerable students; and (iii) Indicated prevention strategies targeting students with suicidal risk.

6. To actualise the expected outcomes of any proposed improvement measures, ownership and leadership with commitment from stakeholders in the community are of utmost importance. We should keep in view the systems for monitoring and evaluating the strategies to prevent student suicides so as to help formulate effective and focused measures. The section to follow sets out the recommendations put forward by the Committee after thorough deliberation.

***A. Enhancement of Student Support at Schools and Post-Secondary Institutions***

***Universal (to support students in general)***

i. To ensure our students can be better supported, we should raise the awareness about mental well-being and enhance mental health literacy among students, teachers and parents, as well as improve and maintain the mental well-being of our students. We should aim to reduce stigma that leads to refusal to seek help, and to create a supportive environment that encourages students to develop adaptive coping skills. Various implementation strategies are recommended.

(a) Cross-sector collaboration should be strengthened in



promoting students' mental health in schools in an integrated manner. For instance, riding on the platform of the Joyful@HK Campaign organised by the DH to increase public engagement in promoting mental well-being, the Joyful@School Campaign has been launched in schools jointly by the DH and the EDB in the 2016/17 school year. It aims at increasing students' engagement in promoting mental well-being, cultivating a positive and accepting culture towards help-seeking as well as promoting knowledge on effective ways to handle challenging situations. Schools can submit applications to the Quality Education Fund for funding not exceeding \$150,000 to implement related activities under the Joyful@School Campaign.

- (b) Schools have to continue enhancing the school-based Healthy School Policy (HSP) to promote and maintain the physical, mental and social well-being of students, to empower them with positive values, proactive attitude and skills to face the challenges in personal growth, thereby enhancing their adaptability and resilience against adversity, and promoting their mental well-being. Also, there are various programmes/projects developed by different bureaux/departments aiming to increase students' resilience and adversity coping skills. The EDB should work with different bureaux/departments and the school sector to

review and consolidate existing resources, and to facilitate schools to optimise the use of these resources and maximise students' learning opportunities.

- (c) As part of value education in schools, the elements of mental health and well-being as well as life and death education have to be strengthened, aiming to, among others, enhance students' knowledge about mental health issues and cultivate a positive attitude of help-seeking through destigmatisation. Related topics should also be offered to students in post-secondary institutions through general education or similar courses.
- (d) It is important to create a positive, caring and supportive school culture for the holistic development of students. Specifically, schools must continue to provide adequate opportunities for students to experience success in different aspects of school life and foster a culture where students learn to appreciate their strengths and diversity. Schools are also encouraged to continue reviewing their existing practices in the learning and teaching domain as well as homework and assessment policies on a regular basis to ensure that they are able to cater to students with different abilities, needs and capacities. Besides, the Government should continue to provide additional resources to support schools to develop students' strengths and abilities as well as

cater for diversity.

- (e) Schools have to continue establishing close communication with parents and strengthen existing communication channels for parents' suggestions and enquiries regarding school-based policies and practices such as homework and assessment policies. Schools and/or parent-teacher associations are also advised to offer parent training on topics such as effective parenting skills, strategies to promote students' mental well-being and availability of multiple articulation pathways to enhance parents' understanding of students' learning and developmental needs. Schools can make use of the annual Subsidy for Home-School Co-operation Activities or the Special Home-School Co-operation Grant disbursed by the EDB in March 2016 for organising home-school activities based on different school circumstances and diverse student needs.
- ii. Enhancing support to students in their change of learning environment and change of level of studies is important. Some implementation strategies are recommended.
  - (a) The EDB must strengthen the existing mechanism for schools to transfer students' related information to new schools so that the schools of upper levels can have a better understanding of their students' developmental and support needs for helping them to cope with the adjustment issues

arising from transition. As for schools, they have to continue strengthening parent education to increase their understanding of the importance of continued intervention such that parents would give their consent to transfer the information.

- (b) The EDB should encourage schools to put more emphasis on students' psycho-social adjustment and adaptation, and include topics such as self-esteem, problem solving skills, stress management, positive emotions and positive relationships in their bridging programmes for Secondary 1 and Secondary 4 students.
- (c) Post-secondary institutions should be encouraged to schedule a period of time for rest and relief during an academic term (e.g. a reading week or period). Also, faculty members and hall wardens should play an active role in helping the new students to adapt to the new environment.

*Selective (to support vulnerable students)*

- iii. The EDB should provide gatekeeper training for people around students, including teachers, peers, university personnel and parents to enhance early identification of and intervention for at-risk students. Considering the fact that adolescents nowadays tend to share their concerns and feelings more with peers, gatekeeper training for peers is recommended to educate youth

proper messages on how to respond properly to peers' suicidal messages and facilitate them to identify peers in need.

- iv. The EDB should further enhance screening tools, guidelines and materials that assist the identification of at-risk students in order to facilitate frontline educators' and parents' suicide prevention work. For post-secondary institutions, health screening to new students using effective channels such as completion of questionnaire through electronic means is recommended in order to identify at an early stage students at-risk or those with a history of mental health problems.
- v. To ensure students with mental health needs could receive timely and appropriate treatment and support, the Government has to strengthen the arrangement for referring the students concerned to the Hospital Authority (HA) for assessment by regularising the practice to obtain parental consent both for making referral for psychiatric evaluation and for the HA to pass the psychiatric reports to schools and Educational Psychologists for follow-up. Post-secondary institutions should also ensure new students who have been identified to require counselling services to be followed up with the support from professionals.

**Indicated (to support students with suicidal risk )**

- vi. The Government should strengthen the interface among medical, education and social service to ensure students in need receive

timely mental health support services. In this connection, a two-year pilot scheme “Student Mental Health Support Scheme” on setting up school-based multi-disciplinary platforms involving healthcare, education and social welfare professionals has been steered by the Food and Health Bureau (FHB), in collaboration with the EDB, the HA and the SWD starting from the 2016/17 school year. The Committee recommends that the services be considered to be regularised with enhancement based on its evaluative outcome.

- vii. Post-secondary institutions are advised to enable students identified to have mental health problems to have easy access to psychiatric and psychological services on campus or nearby health/hospital facilities. Besides, post-secondary institutions are advised to consider around-the-clock campus-run services (e.g. 24-hour hotlines) to provide mental health first-aid to students in need.

### ***Resources Support***

- viii. The EDB should provide schools with additional resources in respect of boosting mental health and well-being education in schools to take forward the professional tasks as recommended in the three levels of universal, selective and indicated in the foregoing paragraphs.

- ix. Post-secondary institutions should consider allocating more of the resources they receive from the University Grants Committee (UGC) and other sources to enhance their promotion of mental health and well-being, screening services, gatekeeper training and follow-up support for students at risk.

## ***B. Enhancement of Support to Families***

### **Universal**

- x. The SWD is recommended to take the lead to systematically coordinate the planning and delivery of family life and parent education (FL&PE) such that the concerted efforts of government bureaux and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) could fill the service gaps (e.g. reaching the hidden parents) and address the needs of parents.
- xi. The Integrated Family Services Centres (IFSCs) and Integrated Services Centres (ISCs) should consider arranging outreach education programmes to cater for the needs of families of different strata including the hard-to-reach or even hidden parents, and the disadvantaged families which are busy to make ends meet, so as to facilitate their participation in the FL&PE.
- xii. Parent education should outline solid practices on healthy family life and effective parenting skills, and address the issues of some

parents having unrealistic expectations and exorbitant demands on their offspring. The Committee on Home-School Co-operation under the EDB should take up an active role to promote the “Happy Kids Charter”, which was developed by the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Centre of the Queen Mary Hospital and received positive feedback from the participating schools.

- xiii. It is recommended that the Government consider promoting a month as the family month, pooling the Government and NGOs’ efforts in promulgating meaningful themes such as positive communication within families (for example, reference can be made to the United Nations’ International Day of Families on 15 May of each year).
- xiv. The EDB should arrange more sharing for schools on effective practices in fostering positive communication between secondary school students and their parents. Consideration may also be given to conducting research such as on how parents and children could effectively communicate in the 21st Century, especially with the widespread use of digital devices.

**Selective**

- xv. The EDB should provide gatekeeper training for parents to develop their sensitivity to students’ signs of mental health issues and cyber bullying.



xvi. The Maternal and Child Health Centres of the DH are recommended to strengthen their services to parents, needy families and prospective parents, such as programmes on positive parenting skills and individual counselling for those having parenting difficulties.

xvii. The SWD is suggested to conduct more promotion about the intensive counselling and support service for individuals and families in crisis provided by the IFSCs, ISCs and Integrated Community Centres for Mental Wellness to facilitate needy families to seek for help. The SWD should also consider streamlining the referral procedures to facilitate the needy families to receive timely service.

**Indicated**

xviii. The SWD is suggested to widely publicise outreach services provided in Family Support Programme for families with members at risk or with mental illness and those with social isolation so that they could receive timely support.

***C. Enhancement of Roles of Traditional and Social Media***

**Universal**

xix. The Government is recommended to make good use of the social media in organising and propagating activities on mental

health promotion. For example, collaborating with Facebook or YouTubers to spread positive messages of the Joyful@School Campaign.

- xx. Cross-sector collaboration is important and we should ride on the strength of those organisations working on suicide prevention and make reference to relevant studies. For example, the CSRP may help engage the media professionals and journalism students in promoting appropriate and ethical practices of suicide reporting through the media. The principles and guidelines as set out in the handbook “Recommendations on Suicide Reporting & Online Information Dissemination for Media Professionals” could be advocated.

**Selective**

- xxi. Youth should be educated social media etiquette to prevent the occurrence of cyberstalking or bullying, and proper messages on how to respond to suicide reporting through social media. In this connection, Facebook, the University and other NGO partners had jointly published a “Help a Friend” booklet to act as a guide on how to help emotionally distressed or even suicidal individuals, which should be promoted to youth as well as the wider community.
- xxii. Cyber-based outreaching services should be explored and supported subject to the evaluation of its effectiveness, given

that cyber-based outreaching services are welcomed by youth nowadays.

- xxiii. Cross-sector collaborative efforts should continue and be supported. For example, the CSRPs may line up with social media platforms in collaboration with related professionals to continue developing online suicide prevention tools such that when users notice any friends having suicidal tendency or exhibiting self-harm behaviour, they could report the case and obtain relevant information to offer support and help. The CSRPs may also continue to promote good practices of social media engagement with vulnerable youth, share the knowledge to the wider community, and conduct ongoing research in understanding the pattern of social media usage of vulnerable individuals so that more timely intervention can be provided.

#### ***D. Promotion of Multiple Articulation Pathways***

- xxiv. The Government should launch more publicity about alternative pathways and Qualification Framework to help parents and students learn about the latest in life planning and make appropriate choices that suit students' abilities, interests and aspirations.
- xxv. Schools should continue to incorporate elements of career exploration in their curriculum planning and learning activities

as well as help students in need to explore multiple exit and re-entry pathways. The EDB in collaboration with schools and stakeholders should continue to step up career and life education to better prepare students in their exploration of multiple pathways, and to share the information with parents.

### ***E. Other Related Views on the Education System***

xxvi. Based on the existing available data and information, the analysis of the 71 suicide cases shows that the possible causes of student suicide involve multiple factors (including mental illness, relationship and personal problem, family discord, academic concern, etc.) and there is no substantial direct link between student suicides and the education system. Even though present findings obtained from evidence-based case analysis do not reflect that student suicides are originated from the education system, the Committee opines that it is important to review the relevant domains of the education system in order to strengthen the support and protect the students and youth from the risk of suicide. The following would be keys in enhancing support to students and youth:

- (a) Students and youth should be helped to strengthen their ability to handle stress, so that the knowledge, skills, beliefs and values, etc. they acquire in primary and

secondary schools can effectively prepare them for coping with university life or challenges beyond secondary school life;

- (b) School is a very important place for young people to understand themselves, accept their limitations and develop their potentials. The sense of achievement attained while in school does not necessarily have to come from academic pursuit, but can be from other aspects of school life. Therefore, the system as a whole should recognise non-academic achievements; and
- (c) Students' talents and abilities in different fields should be recognised, appreciated and developed.

The Committee recommends that the EDB consider reviewing relevant domains in the education system, duly support and address the developmental and diverse needs of students and young people.

### ***Conclusion***

7. The recommendations put forward by the Committee are not meant to be exhaustive. The Committee aims to provide timely and effective measures in response to the sudden student suicide spate, so as to tackle the copycat effect of suicides and to address immediate

concerns of students, parents and teachers. Also, it provides evidence-based suggestions to enhance resilience and well-being of our school children. One important element is to restore the support system for our students such that they feel connected with their families, friends and the community. Suicide is everyone's business of which we should all take ownership and leadership. We all can be a gatekeeper for those who are vulnerable. The society should keep in view related systems, as well as monitor and evaluate the prevention strategies for student suicides. The suicide prevention strategies and supporting services could be evaluated continuously in response to the rapid change of our society. We trust that with concerted effort of the Government, different stakeholders and the community at large, a comprehensive and integrated response to student suicide can be achieved and a caring environment can be cultivated to support students' well-being.